



Socio-Economic

Other Socio-Economic Indicators

POVERTY

Prosperous cities and suburbs are not independent from the problems of the economically disadvantaged areas of the region. Social needs multiply in areas of concentrated poverty. The costs of increased social services impose a heavy burden on a region's competitive position.

Figure 34

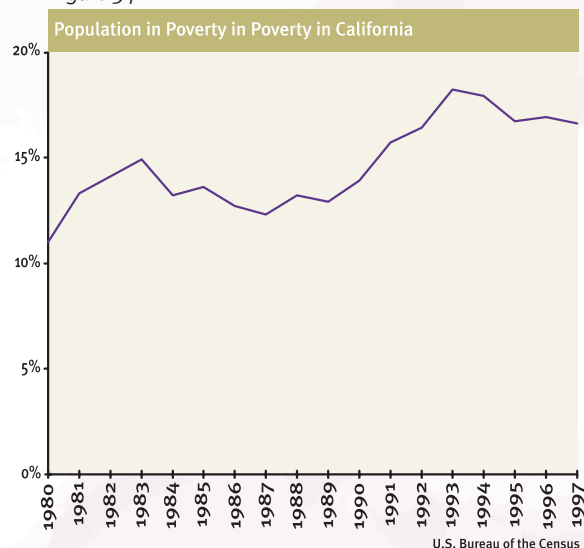
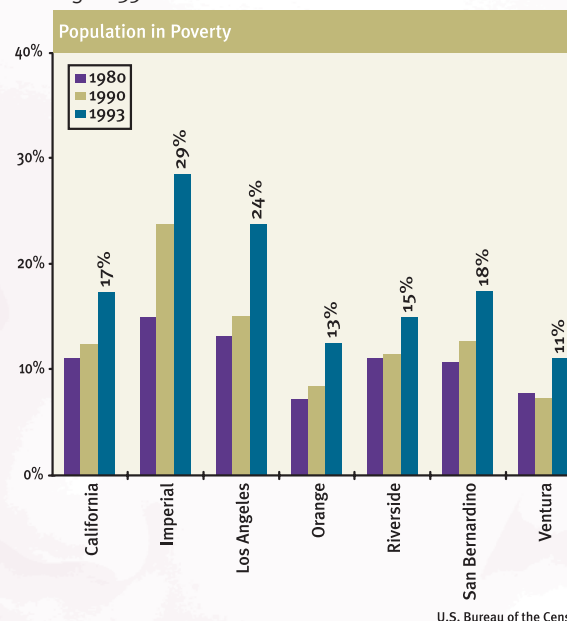


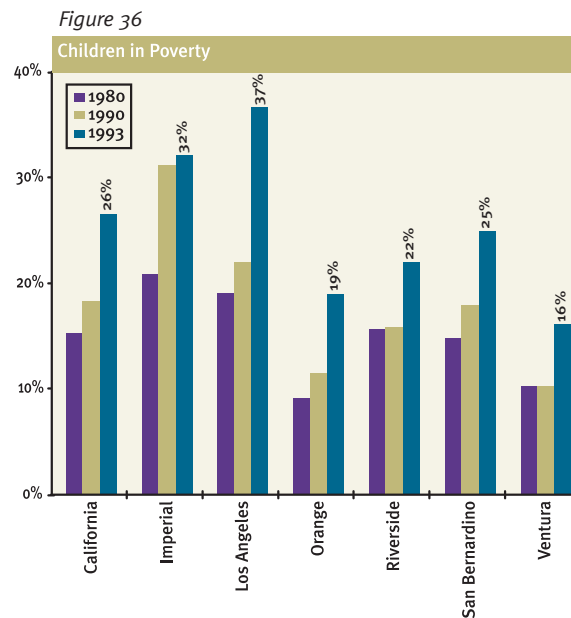
Figure 35



The California poverty rate in 1997, at 16.6 percent, was still higher than pre-recession levels. The poverty rate for California rose from 11 percent in 1980 to over 18 percent in 1993, at the height of the recession. The 1993 poverty rates for the SCAG region ranged from 11 percent in Ventura County to over 28 percent in Imperial County. (The 1993 poverty rates are the latest figures available for the SCAG region.)

Socio-Economic

The number of children living in poverty is an indicator of future costs society will incur in social services and lost economic potential.



Over one-fourth of all children in California in 1993 lived in poverty, compared to 18 percent in 1990. The recession resulted in large increases in poverty rates for children for most counties in the SCAG region. Over one-third of all children in Los Angeles County were considered to be living in poverty in 1993.

Table 20

Children in Poverty in California in 1993	
Children under age 6	29.2%
Children under age 18	26.4%
Related children age 5-17 in families in poverty	23.8%

Source: California Department of Finance and SCAG

POVERTY IN THE NATION

Table 21

Percent of People in Poverty, by State: 1995, 1996, and 1997 States with Highest Rates					
State	3- year average	Rank	Average 1996-1997	Average 1995-1996	Difference in two-year average
Alabama	16.6%	11	14.8%	17.0%	-2.2
Arizona	17.9%	5	18.8%	18.3	0.5
Arkansas	17.2%	7	18.4%	16.0%	2.4
California	16.7%	9	16.8%	16.8%	-
Washington DC	22.7%	2	23.0%	23.2%	-0.2
Louisiana	18.8%	4	18.4%	20.1%	-1.7
Mississippi	20.2%	2	23.0%	23.2%	-0.2
New Mexico	24.0%	1	23.4%	25.4%	-2.0
New York	16.6%	11	16.6%	16.6%	-
Texas	16.9%	8	16.7%	17.0%	-0.3
West Virginia	17.2%	7	17.5%	17.6%	-0.2
U.S.	13.6%	-	13.5%	13.8%	-0.3
LA CMSA	18.5%	-	18.4%	18.7%	-0.3

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, March 1998, 1997, and 1996 Current Population Surveys.

Note: The 1997 poverty threshold from the U.S. Bureau of the Census for a family of four was \$16, 400

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The national poverty rate decreased in the last three years, after the economic recession, from 13.8 percent in 1995 to 13.3 percent in 1997. The 1995-1997 three-year averages ranged from 6.9 percent in New Hampshire to 24 percent in New Mexico. At 16.7 percent in 1997, California ranked seventh highest in the nation. The poverty rate for the Los Angeles Metropolitan area was 18 percent in 1997, a slight improvement from the 18.8 percent in 1996.

POVERTY AND AGE

For children under 18 years of age, the 1997 national poverty rate was 19.9 percent, higher than the 10.9 percent for adults from 18 to 64 and the 10.5 percent for persons 65 and over. Although children were only about one-fourth of the total population in 1997, they accounted for 40 percent of the poor. The national rates indicate that children under age six were particularly vulnerable. Children under age six living in families with a female householder and no spouse present had a poverty rate of almost 60 percent. This rate is more than five times the 10.6 percent rate for children in married-couple families.

POVERTY, RACE, AND ETHNICITY

The national poverty rate decreased from 13.7 percent in 1996 to 13.3 percent in 1997. Both the number of poor and the poverty rates for African Americans and Hispanics decreased in 1997, and this accounted for most of the decrease in the overall poverty rate. The decline in poverty rates between 1996 and 1997 was from 28.4 to 26.5 percent for African Americans and from 29.4 to 27.1 percent for Hispanics. However, the rates for both African Americans and Hispanics remained higher than the rates for people in other racial and ethnic groups. The 1997 poverty rate was 8.6 percent for non-Hispanic Whites and 14 percent for Asians and Pacific Islanders.

POVERTY AND RESIDENCE

In the four regions of the country, the West and the South had poverty rates of 14.6 percent in 1997, higher than the 12.6 percent for the Northeast and 10.4 percent of the Midwest. The South had the highest regional poverty rate prior to 1994. Since that year, the rate for the West has not been significantly different than the rate for the South.

The national poverty rate in central cities declined to 18.8 percent in 1997, down from the 19.6 percent in 1996. Although the poverty rate declined in central cities, the central city rate was still more than twice that in the suburbs. The poverty rate remained unchanged in both suburbs (at approximately 9 percent) and non-metropolitan areas (at just under 16 percent).

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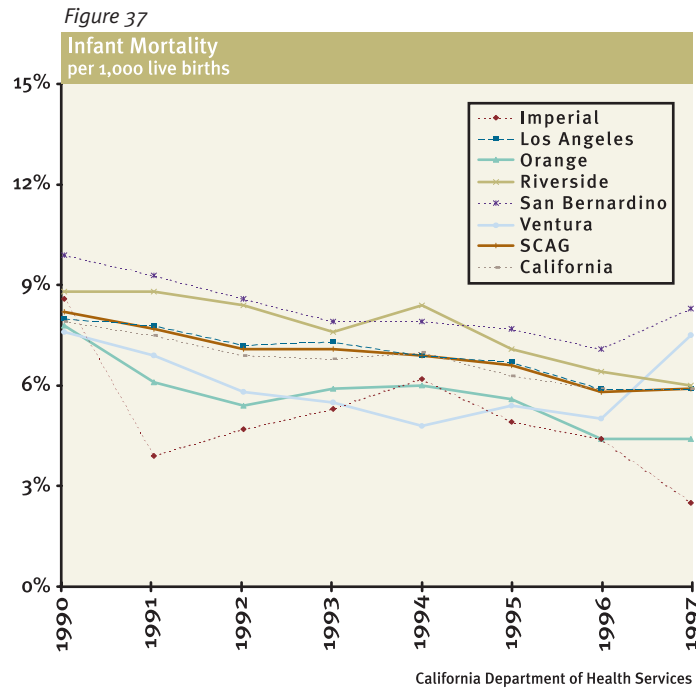
Table 22

People in Poverty in the Nation - Percent of Total			
	1989	1996	1997
Age			
Under 18 Years	20.1	20.5	19.9
18-64	10.2	11.4	10.9
65 and over	11.4	10.8	10.5
Race and Ethnicity			
White	8.3	8.6	8.6
Black	30.8	28.4	26.5
Asian and Pacific Islander	14.2	14.5	14.0
Hispanic	26.3	29.4	27.1
Region			
Northeast	10.2	12.7	12.6
Midwest	12.0	10.7	10.4
South	15.6	15.1	14.6
West	12.8	15.4	14.6
Metropolitan Areas			
Inside Central Cities	18.5	19.6	18.8
Suburbs	8.2	9.4	9.0
Non-Metropolitan Areas	15.9	15.9	15.9
All People in Poverty	13.1	13.7	13.3

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, March 1998 Current Population Survey

INFANT MORTALITY

Infant mortality is an indicator of social and economic conditions and how a society cares for children.



There is progress in reducing the infant mortality rate in the nation, measured by the number of children who die before their first birthday. Even though the infant mortality rates for the region have improved since the 1980s, there was a slight increase between 1996 and 1997. The higher regional rate in 1997 was due to higher rates in two counties (San Bernardino an increase of 7.1 percent in 1996 to 8.3 percent in 1997) and Ventura (an increase of 5.0 percent to 7.5 percent). Imperial County had a 2.5 percent infant mortality rate in 1997, the lowest in the region, compared to an overall 5.9 percent for the region. Adequate prenatal care, particularly during the first trimester of pregnancy, is the major factor in reducing infant mortality. Infant mortality reflects the health status, condition, and care of children before and after birth.

(Please see Access to Health Care under Metropolitan Regions for infant mortality by metropolitan region.)